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ThunderClan Cats

Clan Leader

Bramblestar

Deputy

Lionblaze

Medicine Cat

Jayfeather

Apprentice, Shadecloud

Warriors

Icecloud

Sandstorm

Falcontail

Wavefur

Berrynose

Toadstep

Rosepetal

Sorreltail

Apprentice, Cavepaw

Lilyblossom

Apprentice, Grasspaw

Poppyfrost

Cherrypelt

Molefur

Millie

Thornclaw

Spiderleg

Dustpelt

Brackenfur

Apprentice, Groundpaw

Floodface

Flowerburst

Woodpelt

Birchfall

Mousewhisker

Ivypool

Cloudtail

Brightheart

Bumblestripe

Blossomfall

Queens (she-cats nursing or expecting kits)

Cinderheart (nursing Lionblaze's kits; Pondkit and Sunkit)

Daisy

Dovewing (nursing Bumblestripe's kits; Eaglekit, Talonkit, and Splashkit)

Elders

Graystripe

Purdy

Prologue

PROLOGUE

A gray cat slunk through the moorland, comfortable in the cool night shadows. He walked slowly, his blue eyes scanning the landscape. Suddenly he paused and tasted the air. Pressing himself against the ground, he watched as a rabbit darted past him, a black warrior close behind it. The gray cat narrowed his eyes and leaped high into the air, landing on the black warrior's back. The black cat fell to the ground and stared at the gray cat in surprise.

"What is your name, you puny scrap?" the gray cat said, his voice sounding strange due to moons of not using it.

The black cat didn't answer. There was unmistakably terror in his eyes. "StarClan save me," the black cat whispered, too soft for the gray cat to hear.

"What's your name?" the gray cat snarled.

The black cat blinked. "Crowfeather," he meowed, his voice shaking.

"Well, Crowfeather, you are about to be killed by Thorn," the gray cat growled.

He sank his sharp yellow teeth into Crowfeather's neck and the warrior went limp. Thorn watched, satisfied, as blood oozed quickly from the WindClan cat's neck and his breathing stopped. Thorn turned and trotted onwards until he reached the border.

He took a deep breath. "ThunderClan, I'm back," Thorn said. "And it is time for revenge."

Thorn walked through the forest until he reached a hollow surrounded by smooth stone walls. His piercing eyes searched for one cat and they hardened as they saw the black cat emerging from

the medicine cat den with catmint in her jaws. Sunkit had caught greencough near the end of leaf-bare and was almost completely better. Shadecloud, the black she-cat, was giving the kit the last of the catmint and her blind mentor called, “Thank StarClan no other cats caught greencough this leaf-bare.”

Thorn turned away, tail twitching, and as he crept away, moving silently over the leafy ground, he hissed, “Oh, Shadecloud, your death is near.”

Chapter 1: Groundpaw

GROUNDPAW

Groundpaw's tail twitched with excitement. He raced over to Grasspaw and Cavepaw. "We're going to be made warriors!" Groundpaw exclaimed.

"I know," Grasspaw meowed, sounding irritated. "You just kicked dirt up onto my pelt. I spent half of the day grooming it!"

"Sorry," Groundpaw muttered, but he refused to let Grasspaw's sour mood spoil his big night.

Cavepaw trotted after him. "I want to be named Cavewind!" he said.

Groundpaw looked up at the Highledge to see Bramblestar making his way out of his den. "Let all cats old enough to catch their own prey gather beneath the Highledge for a Clan meeting!" Groundpaw's father called.

Groundpaw and his brother darted towards the Highledge with Grasspaw right behind them hollering, "Groundpaw! Cavepaw! Wait for me!"

The three siblings skidded to a halt, sending dirt flying up into their father's face. "Hey! Watch it!" Bramblestar meowed, spitting the dirt out of his mouth.

Groundpaw and Cavepaw said nothing. It was Grasspaw who whispered, "Sorry, Bramblestar!"

"I, Bramblestar, leader of ThunderClan, call upon my warrior ancestors to look down on these three apprentices. They have trained hard to understand the ways of your noble code, and I commend them to you as warriors in their turn. Grasspaw, Groundpaw, Cavepaw, do you promise to uphold the warrior code

and to protect and defend this Clan, even at the cost of your lives?" the ThunderClan leader said, his amber eyes shining with pride.

"I do," they said in unison.

"Then by the powers of StarClan, I give you your warrior names. Grasspaw, from this moment on you will be known as Grassfur. StarClan honors your kindness and courage and we welcome you as a full warrior of ThunderClan," Bramblestar meowed, stepping forward to rest his head on top of Grassfur's head. She gave his shoulder a quick lick before running over to talk to Lilyblossom.

"Cavepaw," Bramblestar called.

Cavepaw looked at Groundpaw and whispered in his ear, "You'll have to call me Cavewind in a moment."

Groundpaw whispered back, "I bet you won't be called Cavewind."

"From this moment on you will be known as Cavefrost," Bramblestar was saying. "StarClan honors your bravery and determination, and we welcome you as a full warrior of ThunderClan."

Cavefrost stepped forward and his father rested his muzzle on the new warrior's head. Cavefrost stepped back and Groundpaw whispered, "Told you so."

"Groundpaw," Bramblestar meowed.

Groundpaw stepped forward excitedly and in that instant, he knew was his warrior name should be. "From this moment on, you will be known as Ground…" Bramblestar continued.

"Wait!" Groundpaw exclaimed.

Bramblestar narrowed his eyes. "What?" he demanded.

"I want to choose my warrior name," Groundpaw meowed. He noticed Cavefrost staring at him as if he was insane, and perhaps he

was. “I want to be named after my mother.”

Grief and regret passed through Bramblestar’s eyes. Suddenly, the ThunderClan leader looked moons older, weighed down by sorrow and wistfulness. Groundpaw was beginning to wish he had never said anything. Then, Bramblestar straightened again. “Alright, Groundpaw,” he said finally. “From this moment on, you will be known as Groundsquirrel. StarClan honors your bravery and skill, and we welcome you as a full warrior of ThunderClan.”

Groundsquirrel licked Bramblestar’s shoulder as his leader rested his snout on Groundsquirrel's head, and then the young warrior's moment was over. Around him, his Clanmates were chanting, “Grassfur! Cavefrost! Groundsquirrel!”

“In the tradition of our warrior ancestors, Grassfur, Cavefrost, and Groundsquirrel must keep a silent vigil until dawn, and guard the camp alone while we rest,” Bramblestar meowed.

Groundsquirrel grabbed a thrush and a vole from the fresh-kill pile. He dropped the vole at Cavefrost’s paws. “Thanks,” Cavefrost mumbled around a mouthful of his vole.

“No problem,” Groundsquirrel meowed. Suddenly, he noticed Flowerburst walking towards the warriors den. He walked towards the pretty brown she-cat and she turned her sky blue eyes towards him.

“Hi, Groundsquirrel,” she meowed.

“Hi, Flowerburst,” he said nervously. “Do you want to go hunting with me tomorrow?”

“Sure, why not?” she said.

“Okay, then,” he said. “And we can…”

“Groundsquirrel!” he heard a sharp meow behind him.

He turned around to see Bramblestar’s angry amber eyes glaring at him. “Silent vigil,” his father reminded him impatiently.

“Sure…”Groundsquirrel began to reply.

“Silence!” Bramblestar hissed. “Go and find Cavefrost. Grassfur is waiting for you two to join her.”

Groundsquirrel nodded and cast one last look at Flowerburst. Then, with a sigh, he went to find Cavefrost.

Chapter 2: Shadecloud

SHADECLOUD

“Cherrypelt and Lilyblossom drove a fox out of our territory,” Jayfeather meowed. “But Cherrypelt has a nasty wound on her left forepaw. Could you take her some marigold please?”

“Sure,” Shadecloud said, grabbing a few leaves quickly.

Jayfeather sniffed the air. “That’s yarrow,” he said impatiently. “It won’t do any good for her wounds.”

“Sorry,” she muttered, reaching for marigold leaves.

Jayfeather sniffed the leaves. “That’s catmint, Shadecloud!” he exclaimed.

“Great StarClan,” she muttered, grabbing different leaves. “Is this marigold?”

“Finally,” Jayfeather meowed. “What is wrong with you, Shadecloud? Yesterday, you tried to give borage to Falcontail when he needed watermint!”

Shadecloud knew what was wrong. Two days ago, she was certain she had seen icy blue eyes watching her near the entrance to the hollow. She was afraid that Thorn had returned. “Nothing,” she lied, quickly hurrying out of the den.

“You forgot the marigold!” Jayfeather called after her.

She turned around and grabbed the marigold leaves. Then, she raced out of the den before Jayfeather could ask any more questions.

Cherrypelt was limping towards the medicine cat den. “There you are,” she panted. “I thought you had forgotten about me!”

Shadecloud chewed the marigold leaves into a paste and smeared it onto her wound. “Try to take it easy for the rest of the day,” Shadecloud said. “It won’t do any good if you just wipe it right off!”

Cherrypelt nodded. “Thanks, Shadecloud,” she said. “I’ll go take a nap in the warriors den now.”

Shadecloud grabbed a chaffinch and a vole from the fresh-kill pile. She returned to her den. “Here,” she said, dropping the vole at Jayfeather’s feet.

“Thanks,” he meowed. “And quit worrying about Thorn.”

“I wish you would quit reading my mind!” Shadecloud hissed.

“Well, I won’t,” Jayfeather said. “Get ready, because tonight is the half-moon. We're going to the Moonpool tonight.”

Chapter 3: Groundsquirrel

GROUNDSQUIRREL

It was nearly sundown by the time Groundsquirrel woke up. The long, cold vigil had exhausted him and his siblings. Cavefrost and Grassfur were still asleep. Yawning, Groundsquirrel settled back down in his nest. A few moments of rest wouldn't hurt. And then he remembered that he was supposed to go hunting with Flowerburst.

He forced himself to stand up. Groundsquirrel padded out of the warriors den and looked for Flowerburst. She was eating a thrush with her sister, Floodface beside her. "Flowerburst," he called as she swallowed the final bite of her thrush. "Do you still want to hunt?"

"I'll be back soon," Flowerburst whispered to Floodface.

Then she trotted over to Groundsquirrel. "Let's hunt!" she said.

"Where should we go?" he asked her.

"To the Sky Oak," she said.

They ran through the forest, pelts brushing, until they reached the Sky Oak. Groundsquirrel noticed a leaf twitching. "Hold on," he whispered to Flowerburst.

Dropping into a hunting crouch, he slowly stalked forward. He pounced and dispatched the mouse with a sharp bite to its spine.

He turned around, about to call to Flowerburst, but she was stalking a thrush. The bird had no idea she was there. Groundsquirrel crept forward to stand beside her. Suddenly, a twig snapped under her paws and the thrush, alerted, began to fly away. "Oh, I was so close," Flowerburst hissed.

But Groundsquirrel wasn't listening. As the thrush spread its

wings and lifted off the ground, he took a massive leap. He caught a hold of the thrush's wing and it was brought down by Groundsquirrel's weight. He killed it with a quick nip to its neck.

"Nice leap!" Flowerburst exclaimed, impressed.

"Thanks," he said. "You'll catch the next one."

Suddenly, he noticed a squirrel nibbling on an acorn at the base of the Sky Oak. He pointed with his tail towards the squirrel.

Flowerburst slid over the leaves towards the squirrel until she was only a tail-length away from it. She leaped forward, claws outstretched, and killed it with a swift bite to its spine.

"Nice catch!" Groundsquirrel meowed.

The sun was dipping below the orange horizon and Groundsquirrel smelled rain on the wind. "Let's go back to camp," he said.

Flowerburst nodded. They walked back to camp together and Groundsquirrel was happy.

Chapter 4: Shadecloud

SHADECLOUD

The cold wind ruffled Shadecloud's fur as she trudged towards the Moonpool with the other medicine cats. They finally arrived at the Moonpool, which sparkled with starlight.

"I wonder where Mothwing and Willowshine are," Kestrelflight meowed.

Just then, they heard quick pawsteps and the sound of a cat gasping for breath. "Sorry, I'm late," Willowshine panted. "Mothwing was sick with greencough and she died just before sunset."

"Mothwing is dead!" Shadecloud's mentor gasped.

"Do you need catmint?" Littlecloud asked.

"All of our other greencough victims have recovered," Willowshine wheezed.

The five medicine cats crouched beside the Moonpool. Shadecloud lapped the icy water. It tasted of stars and a shadowy darkness engulfed Shadecloud.

Shadecloud opened her eyes. A huge golden tom sat in front of her. "You will not be the hero again," Lionheart meowed in a deep voice.

"What do you mean?" she asked him.

But he was almost completely transparent now and his faint outline vanished. Shadecloud was alone in an unfamiliar forest. She raced through the trees, looking for another StarClan cat. She crashed into a flame-colored tom with emerald eyes was staring at her. "Are you Firestar?" Shadecloud asked.

Firestar nodded. “I have come with a prophecy,” he said.

“What is it?” Shadecloud asked.

“Squirrel will finish the battle,” he meowed.

“StarClan cats,” Shadecloud muttered under her breath. “Always have to be vague and ambiguous.”

Firestar ears twitched. “I heard that. StarClan have their reasons for being so unclear. Knowledge is a powerful tool. Too much of it is a bad thing. Knowing too much of your destiny can change it,” he mowed seriously. “And not even StarClan knows everything.”

Shadecloud nodded. “Do you know what this prophecy means, though?” she asked.

Firestar hesitated. “Yes, we know what this prophecy means,” he meowed finally, carefully choosing his words. “But the meaning is not meant for your ears.”

Firestar’s orange pelt began to fade. “May StarClan light your path, Shadecloud,” he said.

The starry warrior disappeared and Shadecloud woke up back at the Moonpool.

Chapter 5: Groundsquirrel

GROUNDSQUIRREL

Groundsquirrel woke up just before sunhigh. Yawning, he rose quickly to his feet, searching the den for Flowerburst. He was the only one still in the warriors den. The dawn patrol had already returned to camp when he grabbed a thrush from the fresh-kill pile.

Groundsquirrel couldn't find Flowerburst. Suddenly, he saw her eating in the shade with Woodpelt. His tail drooped as he remembered the admiring looks Flowerburst had been giving Woodpelt. It couldn't be true! She had to like him more than Woodpelt. He settled down on a sunny patch of grass, shooting hostile looks at Woodpelt every few seconds.

"Hey, sleepyhead!" he heard Cloudtail meow behind him. Gulping down the last of his thrush, he spun around to face the white warrior. "Would you like to go hunting with me and Lilyblossom?"

"Sure," he mumbled half-heartedly.

Groundsquirrel stopped when he saw a vole. He carelessly snapped a twig as he was stalking it, and it scampered away. "I know you can do better than that, Groundsquirrel!" Cloudtail exclaimed from behind him.

"Sorry," he muttered.

"'Sorry' catches no prey," Cloudtail snapped.

A little bit later, a mouse darted right past Groundsquirrel's paws, but he missed it with a clumsy swipe of his paw. "A kit could have done better than that!" Cloudtail exclaimed. "If you can't focus, then you might as well just go back to camp!"

"Calm down, Cloudtail," Lilyblossom said. "What is wrong,

Groundsquirrel?"

"Nothing," he lied.

Lilyblossom sighed. "I know that isn't the truth, but I won't keep asking," she meowed quietly.

Groundsquirrel heard a rustling in the bushes behind him. "Groundsquirrel!" a voice hissed quietly.

Groundsquirrel stopped. "Groundsquirrel!" the voice hissed again. "Come over here for a second."

Groundsquirrel tasted the air, but the only scent he could pick up was the pungent odor of wild garlic. The others had just seemed to notice that he had stopped. "I'll be right there," Groundsquirrel said.

Groundsquirrel stuck his nose into the bush. He saw a light brown face with narrowed amber eyes staring at him. He sank his claws into the soft ground to keep them from clawing Woodpelt's face.

"What do you want?" Groundsquirrel hissed with his teeth clenched. "And why do you smell like garlic?"

"I 'fell' into a patch of it while I was hunting with Flowerburst," Woodpelt replied calmly.

Groundsquirrel stiffened. Woodpelt had been hunting with Flowerburst? "And as for why I'm here, I saw you hunting with Flowerburst yesterday."

"Yes, I did. Why is it of your concern?" Groundsquirrel meowed, forcing his voice to stay calm.

"That she-cat is going to be my mate, not yours!" Woodpelt replied, his amber eyes blazing with hatred. "Leave her alone! Or else you will face my wrath!"

"Woodpelt, are you coming?" Flowerburst called from somewhere behind Woodpelt.

“Yes,” Woodpelt said. “I thought I saw squirrel over here but there was nothing.”

“Then, come on,” she meowed impatiently. “I want to catch more prey than this skinny mouse today!”

Woodpelt whispered, “Get out of here, fox-dung!”

Groundsquirrel watched, seething, as Woodpelt walked away.

Chapter 6: Shadecloud

SHADECLOUD

Two days after the half-moon, the dawn patrol came racing back into camp. “Bramblestar!” Ivypool, the leader of the dawn patrol, called.

A loud groan came from the Highledge. “What?” Bramblestar asked. “It better be important. I was having this awesome dream where there was endless fresh-kill and Squirrelflight was there and…”

“I don’t care about your dream!” Ivypool interrupted. “We found a strange scent near the abandoned Twoleg nest.”

Bramblestar was staring at her intently, his dream forgotten. “Any other signs?” he asked.

“We found a dark gray tuft of fur caught on a bramble,” Ivypool said. “It smelled like a rogue.”

Terror pulsed through Shadecloud. Thorn! Thorn was back for revenge.

“Shadecloud!” Thornclaw called. “Are you okay?”

But darkness was engulfing Shadecloud’s vision. Shadecloud saw a glint of light flicker on icy blue eyes. In front of her, a dead body of a cat appeared, still and unmoving, and its pelt was smeared with patches of scarlet blood.

The vision faded and Shadecloud found herself lying on the grass. Thornclaw was shaking her frantically with his paws. “Shadecloud, wake up!” Thornclaw was saying desperately.

She rose to her feet. “I am fine,” she croaked.

“Thank StarClan!” Thornclaw said.

“What happened to you?” Bramblestar asked. “You just froze and collapsed.”

She noticed Jayfeather behind Bramblestar, a knowing look in his sightless blue eyes. Shadecloud sighed, once again wishing that Jayfeather couldn’t read her mind.

“What happened,” Bramblestar repeated.

“StarClan sent me a vision,” Shadecloud said finally.

The cats that had gathered around her looked into her green eyes, waiting. “Yes, continue,” Bramblestar meowed.

Shadecloud took a deep breath. “StarClan said that some cat is going to be murdered today.”

“By who?” Bramblestar stammered.

“Seedfur may have died, but this battle is far from over. Thorn has returned and is seeking vengeance,” she meowed gravely.

Chapter 7: Groundsquirrel

GROUNDSQUIRREL

Groundsquirrel shuddered when he heard Shadecloud's words. He decided he would sleep the entire day so that he wasn't overwhelmed by thoughts of Shadecloud's ominous vision.

He settled into his nest, but he struggled to sleep. He eventually fell asleep to the soft whisper of the wind brushing the trees and the distant chirping of the birds.

When his eyes opened in his dream, he was being carried away on a river of blood. An endless chasm was ahead of him, and he tried to paddle away from it. But the current was too strong and Groundsquirrel was pushed towards the void. He slid into the gaping black hole with blood falling on to his snout, and he gasped for breath but only got a mouthful of salty blood. He was falling, and falling, and falling…

A caterwaul of grief woke Groundsquirrel. Had Shadecloud's vision come true? If so, who had died?

Groundsquirrel darted out of the den. The sun was setting quickly, just a faint glow on the horizon. The pale orange light illuminated the hollow and he saw a tom lying by the unmoving body of a she-cat. Her throat was still oozing blood and her face was covered with deep scratches.

He noticed that the dead she-cat's fur was a beautiful dark brown and the mourning tom's fur was light brown. Suddenly, Groundsquirrel realized who the two cats were. He gasped and the grieving tom's eyes opened.

His amber eyes were filled with sadness and grief. Woodpelt said nothing as he saw Groundsquirrel, just pressed his cold black nose back into the soft, smooth fur of the dark brown she-cat and closed his eyes again, lost in bittersweet memories.

Groundsquirrel sank to the ground in disbelief. Shadecloud's vision was true, a ThunderClan cat had died by the vicious claws of Thorn.

And Groundsquirrel wanted nothing but revenge. He wanted to tear out Thorn's throat as Thorn had done to this she-cat today. He wouldn't be satisfied until he felt soft flesh tear under his claws and spatter blood onto them.

Because Flowerburst, the pretty brown she-cat he loved, with her sky blue eyes that sparkled in the sunlight, was the dead cat who laid on the ground in front of him.

Chapter 8: Shadecloud

SHADECLOUD

It was two days after Flowerburst's death. Shadecloud had just finished taking fresh-kill to the nursery and was settling down in her nest with a small shrew for herself. "Hey!" Jayfeather called from the entrance to the den. "We're running low on juniper berries and Berrynose has a stomach ache. Could you go and get some?"

"Can I finish eating my shrew first?" she asked.

"Yes, Shadecloud, of course you can," he meowed.

Shadecloud gulped down the rest of her shrew and trotted into the forest. She padded along the trail she knew by heart, listening to the birdsong and rustling of the leaves.

Shadecloud thought she heard soft pawsteps following her. She continued walking as she cast a glance behind her, and she crashed into the hard bark of an oak tree. "Ouch," she mumbled as she rose to her feet.

Shadecloud continued onwards, ears pricked for the slightest hint of movement, but she heard nothing else. She halted as she saw the juniper bush. She sniffed the air to make sure she wasn't making another error. She smelled the sharp tang of juniper berries and something else. It was the pungent odor of mushrooms, but something was beneath. It was a cat scent, not a Clan scent though.

She paused and tasted the air again. She smelled a faint trace of a ThunderClan cat on its pelt.

It was the smell of Seedfur, the traitor, who Shadecloud had killed in a vicious battle. In stopping Seedfur from attacking Bramblestar, she had possibly saved one of her leader's nine lives.

There was only one non-Clan cat that could have known Seedfur. She whirled around, looking for a dark gray pelt to be hiding in the shadows, searching for the glint of sunlight on icy blue eyes. Thorn was the cat that had been following her and an image of Flowerburst's body lying in the center of the hollow as Woodpelt and Groundsquirrel sat vigil for her flashed through Shadecloud's mind.

She turned tail and fled, running at top speed. Shadecloud didn't care where she was going, she just needed to get away from Thorn before he killed her. She dashed swiftly through the forest and she heard loud pawsteps following her. Thorn kept getting closer and closer. Shadecloud was getting tired and didn't have the stamina to keep running for much longer. There was only one thing she could do. Fight.

She whirled around with her claws unsheathed and leaped at Thorn. Surprised, Thorn fell to the ground. Shadecloud raked her claws across his face and he pushed her off of him with his hind legs. She went flying and slammed into a nearby tree.

Her vision blurred and her head spun. She felt Thorn's hot breath on her neck and heard him hiss, "It is time for you to die Shadecloud."

The world went black and Shadecloud sank into unconsciousness.

Chapter 9: Groundsquirrel

GROUNDSQUIRREL

Groundsquirrel saw Shadecloud leave the camp at sunhigh. He wondered if he should follow her to help her carry more juniper berries. After a few moments of hesitation, he followed her out of camp.

Following her scent, he eventually reached a juniper bush. Shadecloud's scent was fresh, but she had already left. Where had she gone? Had she already gone back to camp? If so, why hadn't he seen her as he followed her scent?

He noticed her scent was leading away from camp, not towards it. Maybe Shadecloud had found a better bush. He sniffed the air again. Was that panic he smelled?

Shadecloud was in trouble and she needed help! He followed her scent trail, racing through the forest. He scented Shadecloud with another cat, a loner, nearby and blood. He slowed down so that the loner wouldn't be alerted to his presence. He saw a big, muscular dark gray tom looming over Shadecloud's unconscious body. Groundsquirrel noticed his cold blue eyes and realized that this loner was Thorn.

Thorn was preparing for the death blow. Rage swept over Groundsquirrel. This cat had killed Flowerburst! Thorn would have to pay.

Groundsquirrel's vision went red as he leaped at Thorn. He crashed into Thorn with the strength of a LionClan cat, and his paw slammed into Thorn's head with the force of ten warriors. Thorn staggered backwards and crumpled to the ground.

Groundsquirrel stood over the gray cat. "You won't kill any other cats now," Groundsquirrel said.

He sank his teeth deep into Thorn's throat and blood gushed from the wound. "No…I must kill Shadecloud," Thorn rasped.

But the effort of speaking was too much for Thorn. Groundsquirrel watched as Thorn drew his last breath and was still. "Shadecloud!" he called urgently.

The black medicine cat didn't move. Only the faint rise and fall of her chest betrayed the fact that she was alive. "Help!" Groundsquirrel called, but no cat answered him.

He began to slowly drag Shadecloud through the forest. Finally, they reached the camp entrance. "What happened?" Brightheart asked.

"Thorn tried to kill Shadecloud, but I killed him first," Groundsquirrel said.

"Is she alive?" Thornclaw asked worriedly.

"Yes," a voice meowed from behind Groundsquirrel.

Groundsquirrel spun around. It was Jayfeather. "But she will have some bad head pains for a while," the blind medicine cat continued. "Bring her into my den so that I can treat her."

Thorn was dead. ThunderClan was finally safe from him and his evil plans.

Epilogue

EPILOGUE

Another half-moon had come. The medicine cats trekked towards the Moonpool, walking a bit slower than usual to help Shadecloud, who still hadn't fully recovered from her fight. Shadecloud sighed with relief as they reached the Moonpool, which sparkled with starlight.

Shadecloud lapped at the cold water and was swept into sleep. Firestar stood in front of her, his starry pelt giving off a white glow.

"Firestar," Shadecloud meowed, dipping her head to the orange tom.

"One threat has passed, but a new one has arrived. Keep a close eye on WindClan, or else you may regret it," Firestar said.

"Is WindClan the wind in Jayfeather's prophecy? How are they an unknown threat?" she asked Firestar.

Firestar didn't answer. The flame-colored tom faded into the night and Shadecloud woke crouched beside the Moonpool.

"Jayfeather," Shadecloud said as they walked back to camp from the Moonpool. "Did you have a dream?"

"Yes," he said. "Ferncloud said, 'Fire will blaze across the moor.' "

"We all must keep an eye on WindClan," Shadecloud meowed. "When will we ever get some peace?"

"Probably never," Jayfeather said. "We will tell Bramblestar about this tonight."

Then, the medicine cats vanished into the dark shadows.

Excerpt from Warriors: The Unknown Threat Series Book #4: Blazing Fire

PROLOGUE

Gray storm clouds covered the sky. WindClan sat together, shivering in the gusts of cold wind. Thunder rumbled in the sky as a white bolt of lightning struck the moor. Rabbitkit wailed loudly and his mother, Bluefang, tried to quiet him. Another bolt of lightning struck close to the camp and Ashstar noticed an orange glow coming from where it struck. “Fire!” she called.

The WindClan cats quickly darted out of camp and towards the ThunderClan border. The flames chased after them, blazing through the moor. Yet another blast of lightning struck the moorland and the fire burned brighter. “Help the elders, warriors!” Ashstar ordered, noticing that Webfoot was falling behind.

The forest on the WindClan side of the border was visible now. The cats had reached the Moonpool stream and Ashstar yelled, “Swim!”

“I can’t swim!” Webfoot complained.

“Heathertail, help Webfoot!” Ashstar ordered.

The WindClan leader jumped into the stream with her warriors close behind her. The water plastered their fur to their skin and they were glad when they pulled themselves up onto the shore.

The flames stayed on the other side, unable to cross the stream. WindClan traveled into their forest. The odor of ThunderClan was lingering in the air and before long they reached the border. “We must ask Bramblestar for help,” Ashstar murmured to herself.

Unfortunately, Weaselfur heard her. “You know we’re not allies any

more, Ashstar! You expect ThunderClan just to say, ‘Here you can have half of our territory!’ “

“No, but we have no choice but to ask them for help,” Ashstar said.

The WindClan cats continued towards the ThunderClan camp, just dark silhouettes moving slowly through the forest. The clouds parted and the moon shone down upon them. They disappeared behind the trees, leaving only pale white light and cold wind.